

Home for Girls

1883 – 1888?

Details

A Home for Girls was run by the Orphanage Committee of the Anglican Diocese of Perth from 1883. Funds were raised and a small cottage was built near the Swan Boys' Home. The Home was for girls of all ages whose backgrounds disqualified them for admission to the Perth Girls' Orphanage in the eyes of orphanage authorities. By 1888, only four girls had ever been admitted to the Home and it is quite likely that it closed sometime soon after that year.

In 1882, the Manager of the Swan Orphanage advertised for a 'Man and Wife' to take charge of a Home for Young Girls 'in the neighbourhood of the Swan'. The purpose of this Home, which was 'distinct from that of the Girls' Orphanage', was to care for 'a small number of young girls, whose friendlessness and exposed condition renders them objects of compassion and sympathy'. This was a tactful way of describing children and young people who had been convicted of offences such as stealing. The need for such a Home had arisen because the Colonial Secretary had tried to send a seven year-old child to the Perth Girls' Orphanage but she had been refused admission on the grounds of her criminality. Funds were raised for a Girls' Home and it seems to have operated from around 1883 to 1888, with few admissions. In 1887, the Home was 'maintained out of the Orphanage Funds' and 'under the control of the Orphanage Committee'. It was reported that girls too old or too young for the Perth Girls' Orphanage were eligible for admission but there were probably other considerations, such as the child's background, that were more relevant in placement decisions.

Donations to support this Home had been received by the Perth Orphanage Committee and a report in 1887 said that a cottage for four girls had been built at 'the foot of the Darling Range' and a matron appointed. Only three girls had ever been placed there. In January 1887, one girl was there but by April it was reported that three girls lived at the Home: 'one of adult age, one nine and one an infant'. In August 1888, the nine-year old and infant remained.

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